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Birch Probe Cries Fall On Deaf Ears

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WASHINGTON — Demands the House Un-American Activities Committee investigate the John Birch Society drew little support Friday from midwest Republicans.

Rep. Noah M. Mason, chairman of the Illinois Republican delegation to Congress, pish-tushed a letter sent by the society for the impeachment of Chief Justice Warren of the Supreme Court as silly.

Mason said his mail was heavy from "a tide my district" for the impeachment and it all has gone right into the waste basket.

Nor did the veteran lawmaker agree with Rep. Henry S. Reuss (D-Wis.) that the House investigate the Birch Society.

"I don't think the committee ought to pay any attention to it," Mason said.

Reuss argued Thursday — as the Senate Republican Whip Sen. Thomas Kuchel (R-Calif.) and Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.) vice chairman of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, were urging an investigation — that any society "which is reported to have stigmatized as Communistic, patriotic Americans as former President Eisenhower, the late Secretary of State Foster Dulles, Chief Justice Warren and Allen Dulles, director of the Central Intelligence Agency," is a fit subject for investigation by the committee.

Rep. Francis Walter (D-Pa.) chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee said he doubted his group could concern itself with an investigation of a society which neither is subversive or plots the overthrow of the government, under the committee's purview of responsibility.

Rep. Donald C. Bruce (R-Ind.) said the allegations against Eisenhower, Warren and the Dulles brothers were made by the founder of the society, Robert Welch, a 61-year-old Boston candy manufacturer before the organization was formed.

"To attribute his philosophy to society members is to apply the 'guilt by association' standard," Bruce said. "Some mighty good people in Indianapolis are members and I don't want to see them hurt."

Rep. Don L. Short (R-Ind.) recommended an attorney general's investigation of the society as "good for all concerned," but he said the stigma that might follow questioning by Walter's committee might be unfair. (The Justice Department is taking a hard look at the society.)

The rank and file membership, said Short, may not realize Welch's background and charges.

"I'm sure there's a place for conservative thinking but I hate to see it go too far and the charges against Eisenhower go too far," commented Rep. E. Y. Berry, (R-N.Y.).

But Berry questioned an investi-

gation is distastful but no un-American or subversive," he said.

Few midwest Republicans — or Democrats — knew very much about the Society except what they read in newspapers.